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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

MARC WOLSTENHOLME,  
Plaintiff

V.

RIOT GAMES, INC.,

## Defendant

Case No. 2:25-cv-00053-FMO-BFM

*Hon. Fernando M. Olguin*

**NOTICE OF MOTION AND  
MOTION TO DISMISS  
COMPLAINT PURSUANT TO  
FRCP 12(B)(6) OR, IN THE  
ALTERNATIVE, FOR MORE  
DEFINITE STATEMENT  
PURSUANT TO FRCP 12(E);  
MEMORANDUM OF POINTS  
AND AUTHORITIES**

Date: February 13, 2025  
Time: 10:00 a.m.  
Crtrm: 6D

[Declaration of Joshua Geller and  
[Proposed] Order filed concurrently  
herewith]

Complaint filed: October 31, 2024

Notice of Removal filed: January 3, 2025

1 **TO ALL PARTIES AND THEIR ATTORNEYS OF RECORD:**

2 PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on February 13, 2025 at 10:00 a.m., or as  
3 soon thereafter as the matter may be heard in Courtroom 6D of the above-entitled  
4 Court, located at 350 W. 1st Street, 6th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90012, Defendant  
5 Riot Games, Inc. (“Riot”) will, and hereby does, move to dismiss the Complaint  
6 filed by Plaintiff Marc Wolstenholme (“Wolstenholme”) for failure to state a claim  
7 pursuant to [Fed. R. Civ. Pro. 12\(b\)\(6\)](#) or, in the alternative, for a more definite  
8 statement pursuant to [Fed. R. Civ. Pro. 12\(e\)](#). The Complaint filed by Plaintiff  
9 Marc Wolstenholme does not contain any allegations of fact regarding the claims  
10 being asserted or any narrative statement at all and so fails to meet the pleading  
11 standards of [Fed. R. Civ. Pro 8](#). *See also Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 678  
12 (*2009*) and *Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 545 (2007).

13 This Motion is based on this Notice of Motion and Motion, the attached  
14 Memorandum of Points and Authorities, the concurrently filed Declaration of  
15 Joshua Geller, any reply papers that may be filed, and on such further oral or  
16 documentary evidence as may be presented at or before the hearing on this matter.

17 The motion is made following a conference between counsel and  
18 Wolstenholme, who is representing himself pro se, pursuant to Local Rule 7-3,  
19 which took place on December 31, 2024, and through further correspondence and a  
20 telephonic conference on January 9, 2025.

22 DATED: January 10, 2025

GREENBERG GLUSKER FIELDS  
CLAMAN & MACHTINGER LLP

25 By: /s/ Joshua M. Geller  
AARON J. MOSS (SBN 190625)  
JOSHUA M. GELLER (SBN 295412)  
26 Attorneys for Defendant  
27 Riot Games, Inc.  
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
II. LEGAL STANDARD .....	2
III. THE COMPLAINT SHOULD BE DISMISSED FOR FAILURE TO STATE A CLAIM.....	3
IV. IN THE ALTERNATIVE, WOLSTENHOLME SHOULD FILE A MORE DEFINITE STATEMENT OF HIS CLAIMS.....	5

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## TABLE OF AUTHORITIES

	Page
<b>CASES</b>	
<i>Am. Ass'n of Naturopathic Physicians v. Hayhurst,</i> 227 F.3d 1104 (9th Cir. 2000).....	2, 5
<i>Ashcroft v. Iqbal,</i> 556 U.S. 662 (2009) .....	2, 1, 2
<i>Aviles v. City of Long Beach,</i> No. 22109684MEMFADS, 2022 WL 2965396 (C.D. Cal. Mar. 9, 2022) .....	6
<i>Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly,</i> 550 U.S. 544 (2007) .....	2, 1, 2
<i>Conta v. City of Huntington Beach,</i> No. 821CV01897JLSKES, 2022 WL 3574439 (C.D. Cal. June 22, 2022) .....	2, 5
<i>Kaotica IP Corp v. Iconic Mars Corp.,</i> No. 21-CV-433-CAB-DEB, 2021 WL 3726006 (S.D. Cal. Aug. 23, 2021) .....	3
<i>Khan v. Google, LLC, et al.,</i> No. 2:22-CV-02333-MEMF-AS, 2024 WL 5220884 (C.D. Cal. Dec. 24, 2024).....	6
<i>Khazal v. Grover,</i> No. 222CV00100HDVKXS, 2023 WL 8244330 (C.D. Cal. Nov. 15, 2023).....	6
<i>Navarro v. Block,</i> 250 F.3d 729 (9th Cir. 2001).....	2
<i>Phillips v. Cnty. of Riverside,</i> No. 519CV01518VAPMAA, 2019 WL 7940686 (C.D. Cal. Aug. 20, 2019).....	3
<i>Robinson v. Sharrieff,</i> No. 2:22CV00806 CAS, 2024 WL 3742705 (C.D. Cal. Aug. 9, 2024).....	3
<i>Somers v. Apple, Inc.,</i> 729 F.3d 953 (9th Cir. 2013).....	2
<b>STATUTES</b>	
17 U.S.C. § 501.....	1, 3
<b>OTHER AUTHORITIES</b>	
Fed. R. Civ. Pro 8 .....	2, 1, 3, 5
Fed. R. Civ. Pro. 12(b)(6) .....	2, 2

1  
2           **TABLE OF AUTHORITIES**  
3           (continued)  
4

	Page
4       Fed. R. Civ. Pro. 12(e).....	2, 2, 5
5       Local Rule 7-3 .....	2
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
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14	
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## **MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES**

## I. INTRODUCTION

Plaintiff Marc Wolstenholme (“Wolstenholme”), who is representing himself *pro se*, has not filed any statement of the nature of his claims. Instead, he initiated this action in the Superior Court for the County of Los Angeles (the “Superior Court”) by filing a judicial council form typically used for initiating contract disputes. On that form, he stated that his principal cause of action was for: “Copyright Infringement ([17 U.S.C. § 501](#)),” and that he is also bringing claims for vicarious copyright infringement, unfair competition, and intentional infliction of emotional distress. But he has not filed any pleadings with the Superior Court, or with this Court after removal, identifying any facts that form the basis for those claims.

This is not simply a case in which a plaintiff has filed an insufficiently detailed complaint. Instead, Wolstenholme has failed to file *any* narrative statement of his claims. He has filed only a state court form akin to a civil cover sheet, but nothing else. When counsel for Defendant Riot Games, Inc. (“Riot”) pointed out this defect, Wolstenholme acknowledged that he had not filed what he calls his “long complaint” and would “check in with the court . . . to ask them if they need the long complaint right away.” Declaration of Joshua Geller (“Geller Decl.”), ¶ 5, Exh. B. Wolstenholme has still not filed any other complaint, although he has communicated his intention to “update it further” and “snowball my complaints” with additional allegations. *Id.* ¶¶ 5–6, Exh. B. Riot cannot reasonably prepare a response to this action until Wolstenholme complies with the obligations of **Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8** and files the required “a short and plain statement” of his claims consistent with the applicable pleading standards under *Twombly* and *Iqbal*. Accordingly, this Court should dismiss this action for failure to state a claim or, in the alternative, order a more definite statement.

1      **II.    LEGAL STANDARD**

2                 Federal Rule of Civil Procedure (“FRCP”) 8 requires a plaintiff to provide  
3 “fair notice of what the claim is and the grounds on which it rests.” *Bell Atlantic*  
4 *Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 545 (2007) (quotation and alteration omitted).  
5 Although a plaintiff need not provide “detailed factual allegations,” he must  
6 provide “more than an unadorned, the defendant-unlawfully-harmed-me  
7 accusation.” *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009) (internal quotation marks  
8 omitted). “[A] plaintiff’s obligation to provide the grounds of his entitlement to  
9 relief requires more than labels and conclusions, and a formulaic recitation of the  
10 elements of a cause of action will not do.” *Twombly*, 550 U.S. at 555.

11                A motion to dismiss under FRCP 12(b)(6) “tests the legal sufficiency of a  
12 claim.” *Navarro v. Block*, 250 F.3d 729, 732 (9th Cir. 2001). Dismissal under  
13 FRCP 12(b)(6) “is proper when the complaint either (1) lacks a cognizable legal  
14 theory or (2) fails to allege sufficient facts to support a cognizable legal theory.”  
15 *Somers v. Apple, Inc.*, 729 F.3d 953, 959 (9th Cir. 2013). To survive dismissal, “a  
16 complaint must contain sufficient factual matter, accepted as true, to ‘state a claim  
17 to relief that is plausible on its face.’” *Iqbal*, 556 U.S. at 678.

18                When a complaint is “so vague or ambiguous that the party cannot  
19 reasonably prepare a response,” a defendant may move for a more definite  
20 statement. FRCP 12(e). “An order granting the motion is appropriate when the  
21 responding party cannot ascertain the substance of the asserted claim.” *Conta v.*  
22 *City of Huntington Beach*, No. 821CV01897JLSKES, 2022 WL 3574439, at \*2  
23 (C.D. Cal. June 22, 2022).

24                While pleadings filed by *pro se* litigants are often interpreted liberally, “a *pro*  
25 *se* litigant is not excused from knowing the most basic pleading requirements.”  
26 *Am. Ass’n of Naturopathic Physicians v. Hayhurst*, 227 F.3d 1104, 1107–08 (9th  
27 Cir. 2000), as amended on denial of reh’g (Nov. 1, 2000).

1       **III. THE COMPLAINT SHOULD BE DISMISSED FOR FAILURE TO**  
2       **STATE A CLAIM.**

3           Wolstenholme has not complied with the most basic requirement of FRCP 8:  
4           “a short and plain statement of the claim showing that the pleader is entitled to  
5           relief.” FRCP 8(a)(2). Instead, he has simply filed a form document identifying  
6           several causes of action that he intends to bring, but without any narrative statement  
7           whatsoever. Threadbare complaints that do not specify the factual basis for the  
8           stated claims are routinely dismissed for failure to state a claim. *E.g., Robinson v.*  
9           *Sharrieff*, No. 2:22CV00806 CAS (ADSX), 2024 WL 3742705, at \*2 (C.D. Cal.  
10          Aug. 9, 2024) (dismissing complaint for failure to meet FRCP 8 requirement  
11          because it merely listed the claims but did “not specify the nature” of the claims);  
12          *Phillips v. Cnty. of Riverside*, No. 519CV01518VAPMAA, 2019 WL 7940686, at  
13          \*1 (C.D. Cal. Aug. 20, 2019) (dismissing unintelligible complaint that consisted of  
14          “‘naked assertion[s]’ devoid of ‘further factual enhancement’”); *Kaotica IP Corp v.*  
15          *Iconic Mars Corp.*, No. 21-CV-433-CAB-DEB, 2021 WL 3726006, at \*2 (S.D.  
16          Cal. Aug. 23, 2021) (dismissing claim that contained “no factual allegations  
17          whatsoever”).

18           Here, the only Complaint that Wolstenholme filed is contained on a Superior  
19           Court Judicial Counsel Form PLD-C-001 (the “Form Complaint”). *See* Dkt. No. 1,  
20           Exh. A (copy of Complaint submitted with Notice of Removal). The form states  
21           that it is for a “contract” action, but in Section 8 of the form, Wolstenholme  
22           identified his causes of action as: “Copyright Infringement: Specify as ‘Copyright  
23           Infringement (17 U.S.C. § 501).’” The form also states as “other allegations”  
24           “Vicarious Copyright Infringement, Unfair Competition, and Intentional Infliction  
25           of Emotional Distress.” The Form Complaint does not include *any* other  
26           description of the nature of his claims.

27           Because it does not contain any factual narrative at all, it fails to state any of  
28           the purported claims. As to the two copyright infringement claims (direct and

1 vicarious), Wolstenholme does not identify a specific work, allege that he owns the  
2 copyright in that work, identify any infringing act by Riot, or state what relief is  
3 sought. As to the unfair competition claim, he does not allege what the wrongful  
4 conduct was nor how it damaged Wolstenholme. And the intentional infliction of  
5 emotional distress claim does not identify what conduct is being complained of.  
6 There is no statement of the claims at all.

7       Based on email correspondence and a telephonic conference between Riot's  
8 counsel and Wolstenholme, Riot understands that Wolstenholme *intends* to file a  
9 narrative complaint. Wolstenholme has emailed to Riot's counsel several versions  
10 of a lengthier document that he denominated "Complaints" for copyright  
11 infringement, vicarious copyright infringement, unfair competition claims, and  
12 intentional infliction of emotional distress. Geller Decl., ¶ 2. However, upon  
13 checking the Superior Court docket, Riot's counsel confirmed that none of these  
14 narrative document had been filed, and only the Form Complaint had been filed.  
15 *Id.* ¶¶ 2–3, 6.

16       On December 17, 2024, Riot's counsel emailed Wolstenholme informing  
17 him that the narrative complaint he had previously emailed had "not yet been filed  
18 with the [Superior] Court," and noting that the only document filed was the Form  
19 Complaint. Geller Decl., ¶ 4, Exh. A.

20       Wolstenholme responded by email confirming that only the Form Complaint  
21 had been filed. He further stated that a version of the complaint he had emailed on  
22 December 5 was "an update of the long complaint" and that he would "be wanting  
23 to update it further . . . and convert[] the complaints, motions, answers,  
24 declarations, briefs and evidence to plead paper." Geller Decl., ¶ 5, Exh. B.  
25 Wolstenholme then stated: "I plan to snowball my complaints for many reasons,  
26 one being because of the wider damage and implications of these complaints and  
27 because of the vulnerabilities of myself and of others used by Riot to hide IP theft,  
28

1 mainly children.”<sup>1</sup> *Id.* Wolstenholme has subsequently continued to email other  
2 documents to Riot’s counsel that he titles “complaints,” which all differ from one  
3 another. Geller Decl., ¶ 6. None of these have been filed. *Id.*

4 After further email correspondence with Wolstenholme, Riot’s counsel spoke  
5 to him telephonically on January 9, 2025. Geller Decl., ¶ 9. Wolstenholme stated  
6 that at least one attempted filing had been rejected by the Los Angeles Superior  
7 Court Clerk, and that he intended to file a further complaint. *Id.*

8 It appears from these communications that Wolstenholme intends to file  
9 further documents alleging claims against Riot. But he has not done so. Pleading  
10 requirements are not a mere formality—the pleadings set out what is at issue in the  
11 case, and what the permissible scope of discovery will be. Wolstenholme must set  
12 out his claims in a single articulable, readily identifiable pleading. Riot cannot be  
13 expected to defend itself against a moving target of scattershot allegations emailed  
14 haphazardly to it. The Federal Rules dictate that a plaintiff must file a short and  
15 plain statement of the claim, and Wolstenholme’s *pro se* status does not excuse him  
16 from that obligation. *Am. Ass’n of Naturopathic Physicians*, 227 F.3d at 1107–08.

17 **IV. IN THE ALTERNATIVE, WOLSTENHOLME SHOULD FILE A**  
18 **MORE DEFINITE STATEMENT OF HIS CLAIMS.**

19 While dismissal is the appropriate remedy for a complaint that fails to  
20 comply with the basic requirements of [FRCP 8\(a\)](#), the Court may alternatively  
21 order Wolstenholme to provide a more definite statement of his claims under [FRCP](#)  
22 [12\(e\)](#). Wolstenholme’s Form Complaint is “so vague and ambiguous” that Riot  
23 cannot reasonably prepare a response. *See, e.g., Conta v. City of Huntington Beach,*  
24 [No. 821CV01897JLSKES, 2022 WL 3574439](#), at \*2 (C.D. Cal. June 22, 2022)  
25 (“An order granting the motion is appropriate when the responding party cannot  
26 ascertain the substance of the asserted claim.”).

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<sup>1</sup> Wolstenholme has sent numerous emails to Riot and its counsel concerning  
various perceived conspiracies. Whatever it is Wolstenholme claims, Riot denies.

1       For the same reasons that Wolstenholme's Form Complaint fails to allege  
2 sufficient facts to state a claim, so too does it "fail[] to specify the allegations in a  
3 manner that provides sufficient notice" of the nature of the claims. *Khazar v.*  
4 *Grover*, No. 222CV00100HDVKSX, 2023 WL 8244330, at \*3 (C.D. Cal. Nov. 15,  
5 2023) (citing *Swierkiewicz v. Sorema N. A.*, 534 U.S. 506, 514 (2002)).

6       Every factual detail is absent from Wolstenholme's Complaint. This  
7 includes, as to his copyright claims, absolutely required allegations like ownership  
8 of a valid copyright or what conduct by Riot he believes infringes his rights. *See,*  
9 *e.g.*, *Khan v. Google, LLC, et al.*, No. 2:22-CV-02333-MEMF-AS, 2024 WL  
10 5220884, at \*6 (C.D. Cal. Dec. 24, 2024) (granting motion for more definite  
11 statement where plaintiff "has not established ownership of a valid copyright" and  
12 "the pleadings as to the copyright material are too vague for the Court to determine  
13 what (if anything) was stolen, and by whom"); *see also Aviles v. City of Long*  
14 *Beach*, No. 22109684MEMFADS, 2022 WL 2965396, at \*5 (C.D. Cal. Mar. 9,  
15 2022) (granting motion for more definite statement where the "legal theory  
16 underlying [the claim] is indiscernible from either the title of the claim or from the  
17 supporting allegations"). Accordingly, if the Court declines to dismiss  
18 Wolstenholme's complaint for failure to state a claim, Riot respectfully requests  
19 that Wolstenholme be ordered to provide a more definite statement of his claims.

20  
21 DATED: January 10, 2025

GREENBERG GLUSKER FIELDS  
CLAMAN & MACHTINGER LLP

22  
23  
24 By: /s/ Joshua M. Geller  
25 AARON J. MOSS (SBN 190625)  
26 JOSHUA M. GELLER (SBN 295412)  
27 Attorneys for Defendant  
28 Riot Games, Inc.

## **CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE**

The undersigned, counsel of record for Defendant Riot Games, Inc., certifies that this Memorandum of Points and Authorities contains 1,860 words in compliance with the word limit of Local Rule 11-6.1.

DATED: January 10, 2025

**GREENBERG GLUSKER FIELDS  
CLAMAN & MACHTINGER LLP**

By: /s/ *Joshua M. Geller*

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